



By Ben Wright
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Olan Faulk, a former two-term mayor of Richland, Ga., and senior aide to U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn, died Thursday at Candler Hospital in Savannah. He was 80

"Georgia and America have lost a great public servant in Olan Faulk," U.S. Rep. Sanford Bishop Jr. said. "His work as a rural educator, a community action program administrator, a longtime and effective aide for former U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn, and as mayor of his hometown of Richland, Ga., are proof positive that Olan Faulk made a difference with his life."

Columbus resident Benny Parker said he turned to Faulk shortly after he was appointed as a field representative for Georgia's other U.S. Sen. Wyche Fowler in 1987.

"I truly have lost a friend in Olan Faulk," Parker said Tuesday. "He was a great mentor. He was the first person I reached out to after Wyche Fowler appointed me. I wanted to meet him and get his advice. He took me in under his wing and I didn't have any major problems."

A funeral Mass will be held at 11 a.m. today at Resurrection of Our Lord Catholic Church in Savannah, according to Bynes-Royall Funeral Home.

Born Sept. 17, 1930, in Cairo, Ga., Faulk graduated from Washington High School and attended

Fort Valley State College, now Fort Valley State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree. He taught vocational agriculture for seven years in the Stewart County School System and served 13 years as director of operations for the Enrichment Services Program in Columbus before joining the staff of U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn.

In the early 1970s, state Rep. Calvin Smyre said Faulk was his boss for about two years when he was hired as director of the Neighborhood Service Center at the Enrichment Services Program.

"He had to be one of the best people I ever met," Smyre said. "He was very community oriented."

He built strong relationships with elected officials, Smyre said. In those days, relationships were important because that's how budgets were funded. He was able to work behind the scenes and make a difference.

"He was never an out front guy," Smyre said. "He stayed behind the scene."

After retiring as a senior aide to Nunn, Faulk was elected in 1998 as the first black mayor of Richland. He served two terms.

Parker said Faulk was sincerely committed to helping every citizen.

"The city has lost a great public servant," he said.

Faulk was a member of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, but later joined Resurrection of Our Lord Catholic Church in Savannah.

He also was a member of several civic and community organizations in the Chattahoochee Valley, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Muscogee County Rotary Club, the board of directors of Stewart-Webster Rural Health Board.

Other than his wife, Risco, survivors include a son, Wendell Faulk of Buena Vista, Ga; four daughters, Vickie Faulk Clemons of McDonough, Ga; Angela Mobley Chavis, Marilyn Mobley Geiger and Carolyn Mobley Pierce, all of Savannah; a brother, Outley Faulk of Milledgeville, Ga; 15 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and a host of nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.